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1993  
Executive Research Project  
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**Military Unions:  
A Signpost on the Path of Subjective  
Control and Occupationalization  
of the Armed Forces**

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U.S. Navy

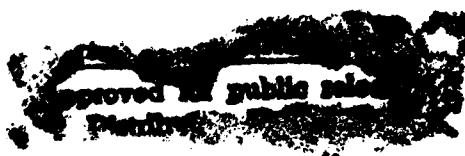
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DTIC QUALITY INSPECTED 5

## REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

1a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION Unclassified			1b. RESTRICTIVE MARKINGS		
2a. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY N/A			3. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY OF REPORT Distribution Statement A: Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.		
2b. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE N/A			5. MONITORING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S) Same		
4. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S) NDU-ICAF-93- 192			7a. NAME OF MONITORING ORGANIZATION National Defense University		
6a. NAME OF PERFORMING ORGANIZATION Industrial College of the Armed Forces		6b. OFFICE SYMBOL (If applicable) ICAF-FAP		7b. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) Fort Lesley J. McNair Washington, D.C. 20319-6000	
6c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) Fort Lesley J. McNair Washington, D.C. 20319-6000		8a. NAME OF FUNDING/SPONSORING ORGANIZATION		8b. OFFICE SYMBOL (If applicable)	
8c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)		9. PROCUREMENT INSTRUMENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER			
		10. SOURCE OF FUNDING NUMBERS			
		PROGRAM ELEMENT NO.		PROJECT NO.	
		TASK NO.		WORK UNIT ACCESSION NO.	
11. TITLE (Include Security Classification) <i>Military unions: a signpost on the Path of Subjective Control + Occupationalization of the Armed Forces</i>					
12. PERSONAL AUTHOR(S) <i>Tom Stites</i>					
13a. TYPE OF REPORT Research		13b. TIME COVERED FROM <i>Aug 92</i> TO <i>Apr 93</i>		14. DATE OF REPORT (Year, Month, Day) April 1993	
15. PAGE COUNT <i>37</i>					
16. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTATION					
17. COSATI CODES			18. SUBJECT TERMS (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number)		
FIELD	GROUP	SUB-GROUP			
19. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number)  SEE ATTACHED					
20. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY OF ABSTRACT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNCLASSIFIED/UNLIMITED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SAME AS RPT. <input type="checkbox"/> DTIC USERS			21. ABSTRACT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION Unclassified		
22a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL Judy Clark			22b. TELEPHONE (Include Area Code) (202) 475-1889		22c. OFFICE SYMBOL ICAF-FAP

## **ABSTRACT**

### **MILITARY UNIONS:**

#### **A SIGNPOST ON THE PATH OF SUBJECTIVE CONTROL AND OCCUPATIONALIZATION OF THE ARMED FORCES**

This research paper examines the unionization of U.S. armed forces as a cause and effect relationship dependent upon the type and form of civilian leadership exercised over the U.S. military institution. In a liberal democratic society, formal and informal power groups interact to influence the form and substance of the military institution based on the perceived threat to national security. Two specific issues influence military unionization. First, the location of the military institution on the occupational/professional continuum. And secondly, the form of civilian control over the military (subjective or objective). The substance of the unionization issue is examined from a historical perspective, as well as existing European models.

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## MILITARY UNIONS:

### **A SIGNPOST ON THE PATH OF SUBJECTIVE CONTROL AND OCCUPATIONALIZATION OF THE ARMED FORCES**

In democratic societies, military unionization policies are diverse and radically different. In the United States the issue of military unions has quietly disappeared, despite a plethora of predictions to the contrary. My intent is to examine what factors influence a nation's move towards, or away from, military unionization, and to what extent those factors might influence future unionization within the U.S. military. I will proceed with this examination by addressing the following issues.

- Civil-Military Relations in a Democratic Society
- U.S. Military Unionization: Pro & Con
- Foreign Military Unions
- Power Groups Influencing Unionization
- U.S. Military Unionization Policy
- Forecast for the U.S. Military

In democratic societies, the state's social/political environment predetermines the potential for unionization of the military. Examination of the civil-military relations provides an analysis of that environment. My analysis focuses on three elements. First, I will describe a relevant dilemma of the military institution in a democratic society. This element is the cornerstone of the military unionization issue. It is followed by an examination of "objective versus subjective" civilian control

of the military. The third environmental element is an analysis of the military as a "profession or occupation". The latter two elements are key to a nation's acceptance or rejection of military unions.

Following the social and political analysis of civil/military relations, I will review the general arguments for and against military unions. It is not my intention to support the merits of either position; however, it is important to recognize that each position requires fundamentally different civil-military relationships.

An examination of military unions in several European countries allows for a pragmatic analysis of the unionization process. No two countries have identical forms of unionization; however, the process for union development is a function of their social and political environment.

On the assumption that a democratic society will always tolerate divergent views regarding military unions, what power groups ultimately determine national policy? Power group identification is fundamental to understanding the possible policy outcomes. First, I will identify the major social, political and military power interests that influence military unionization. Next, I will examine the relationship of these power groups to the military institution.

U.S. military unions surfaced as an issue in the mid-1970's. Policy decisions of 1978 address the issue and remain current today. A policy examination provides insight into the power group

process and the social/political environment.

A forecast for U.S. military unionization is possible through close examination of the events and process that are set forth in this research project.

### Civil-Military Relations in a Democratic Society

The dilemma of democratic societies is how to justify standing military institutions whose norms and values are an aberration to the fundamental principles of individual rights found in the society as a whole. When a democratic state experiences a threat to its primary vital interest, survival, the military institution is accepted as necessary to insure state preservation. When the threat to state survival is minimized, or nonexistent, the social conflict between the military institution and its parent society intensifies. In the United States, the founding fathers solved this dilemma by pursuing the concept of the "citizen-soldier". However, this ideal state has been difficult to achieve in the reality of nation-states.

What is the dilemma and what is the relationship to unions? In democratic societies the protection of individual rights is the cornerstone of government. Each institution in the society must protect individual rights to the maximum extent possible. The military, as an institution, represents one of only a few enigmas in democratic society. It is an institution based on coercion and the abrogation of individual rights. The military,



with its "top to bottom" control, is viewed as anti-individualistic and in conflict with basic democratic principles.<sup>1</sup> The military, as an institution, has always required commitment and mission be given priority over one's self.<sup>2</sup> Huntington implies that the social conflict (subordination of individual rights) is central to liberalism's distrust of the military. Over time, the state has developed a unique set of military regulations and judicial procedures to legitimize and isolate the military as an institution.

#### **Objective vs. Subjective Control**

Once a democratic society legitimizes the autocratic military institution, the issue becomes one of how to maintain civilian control over the military. The form of civilian government is relevant to the issue of unionization. Civil-military relations literature debates two primary means to insure civilian control of the military.<sup>3</sup> Samuel Huntington is the proponent of "objective control" and Morris Janowitz places emphasis "subjective control".

Objective civilian control achieves its dominance by professionalizing the military and making it a tool of the state.<sup>4</sup> The intent of this process is to politically sterilize the military and maximize civilian control. This produces the lowest possible level of military political power with respect to all political groups. The military is therefore viewed as

distinct and separate from all other political power groups in the society. Objective control reduces the political influence of the military while maintaining a professional corps focused on achieving military security. The call for objective control has routinely come from the military in an attempt to minimize the influence of outside interest/power groups. Objective control is not likely to support military unionization.

Subjective control achieves its end by civilianizing the military and making the institution a mirror of the state.<sup>5</sup> In the subjective sense, civilian control denies the existence of an independent military institution and presupposes a conflict between civilian control and the needs of military security. Subjective control brings military values and behavior more in line with society at large; and politicization of the military is not viewed as a detrimental byproduct by its proponents. In general, liberal democratic societies pursue subjective control of their militaries. Due to the political nature of subjective control, military unionization for political purposes is certainly within the realm of possible outcomes.

#### **Military: Profession vs. Occupation**

Charles Moskos links the concepts of objective and subjective control to the belief that the military is being transformed from a profession to an occupation.<sup>6</sup> This evolution

results from the decline of objective control and a move towards more subjective control of the military. The professional model recognizes the legitimacy of institutional values, and in the case of the military, requires raising the interests of the institution above that of the individual. Often referred to as a "calling," the military as a profession is tied to self-sacrifice and rejects self-interests. Expectations of the professional are characterized by achieving a life style appropriate to an achieved position rather than monetary remuneration. In addition, there exists an expectation of paternalistic support from the government; in return the professional is obligated to serve in whatever capacity required by society. Self-sacrifice and personal hardships are understood to be part of the implied "social contract" between the soldier and his society. The professional model rejects unionization.

The occupational model gives first priority to self-interests rather than the task or the organization.<sup>7</sup> Occupational motivations are accepted in the civilian sector and would apply to a subjectively controlled military. Implied contracts are meaningless and monetary remuneration should be based on skill level and productivity. In a peacetime occupational military, sustained self-sacrifice and tolerance of personal hardships would require equitable compensation. The occupational model accepts unionization as a means to achieve this end.

In democratic societies, military institutions lie somewhere between professional and occupational models. Because

of its size and diversity, the U.S. military is very difficult to locate on the professional-occupational continuum. Elite combat units (Marine Expeditionary Units, Army Rangers, Navy SEALs and Air Force fighter squadrons), who "manage of violence," are close to the professional model. Military support personnel (cooks, stevedores, truck drivers, clerks, instructors, lab technicians), are more aligned with the occupational model.

In general, the U.S. military is shifting away from the professional model and gradually assuming the characteristics of an occupation. Evidence supporting this assertion permeates the literature on the subject. First is the increasing number of civilians employees in the military. These "support" personnel provide specialty skills and services not traditionally associated with the armed forces. Civilian employees bring with them the ethics and values of the occupational model.<sup>8</sup> A key element, relating to the issue of unions, is political representation of DOD civilian personnel.

Second is the changing structure of authority in the military. The iron-fisted authoritarian is finding it difficult to survive in the 1990's. Today there is a greater reliance on manipulation, persuasion and group consensus.<sup>9</sup> Codetermination is surfacing in military "support" units that focus on production and quality of effort. Officers, who survive in this environment, are rapidly becoming managers and administrators, similar to their civilian counterparts.

Third, the AVF (All Volunteer Force) concept has promoted

education and economic benefits for the individual (occupational model) as reasons for entering military service.<sup>10</sup> Today's military is manned by competing with the civilian job sector. To retain service members a variety of compensation plans exist: salary linkages, flight pay, sea pay, nuclear power pay, and a variety of "bonus" programs.

As the military institution gravitates toward the occupational model, in the ongoing socialization process, it will assimilate the models characteristics. Ultimately the maturing occupational model will address the issue of workers rights and representation. Political representation of the military workforce is a natural conclusion of the occupational model. Military unions represent one means of achieving that end.

#### U.S. Military Unionization: Pros & Cons

The issue of military unions is, more often than not, clouded with emotion. Proponents argue that "change" to the military institution is an essential element of continuing socialization; opponents claim that the existing institution will be irreparably degraded by that change. By examining both positions, a rational insight of the unionization issue is available to the reader.

**Unionization Pro's:** Proponets of military unionization argue that the needs and freedoms of the individual must be protected

from the abuses and neglect of the military institution. The issues fall into two categories: individual needs and collective representation.

<h1>MILITARY UNIONS</h1> <h2>Issue: Need vs Impact</h2>	
PROPOSONENT	OPPONENT
<p><b>INDIVIDUAL REQUIREMENTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PROTECTION OF INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IMPROVE JUSTICE SYSTEM</li> <li>• IMPROVE LITIGATION PROCEDURES</li> <li>• PROTECT 1st AMENDMENT RIGHTS</li> </ul> </li> <li>- MONITOR WORKING CONDITIONS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CLARIFY JOB DEFINITION</li> <li>• REDUCE EXCESSIVE WORK HOURS</li> <li>• ELIMINATE MEANINGLESS WORK</li> <li>• IMPROVE SAFETY &amp; HEALTH FACTORS</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>COLLECTIVE REQUIREMENTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PROTECTION OF MATERIAL BENEFITS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PAY &amp; ALLOWANCES</li> <li>• HOUSING &amp; QUARTERS</li> <li>• RETIREMENT</li> <li>• HEALTH &amp; DENTAL CARE</li> <li>• EDUCATION &amp; TRAINING</li> <li>• TRAVEL ALLOWANCES</li> <li>• COMMISSARY &amp; PX BENEFITS</li> <li>• RECREATIONAL FACILITIES</li> </ul> </li> <li>- POLICY AND PERSONNEL ISSUES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• POLITICAL REPRESENTATION</li> <li>• SPECIAL INTEREST GRP REPRESENTATION</li> <li>• PROMOTIONS &amp; ADVANCEMENTS</li> <li>• RECRUITING STANDARDS</li> <li>• DRESS CODES</li> <li>• JOB REQUIREMENTS</li> <li>• CUSTOMS &amp; TRADITIONS</li> <li>• HARDSHIP DUTY</li> <li>• PHYSICAL FITNESS STANDARDS</li> <li>• PAY INEQUITIES</li> <li>• PREMATURE TERMINATION</li> <li>• SERVICE SEPARATION</li> <li>• AVAILABILITY OF SOCIAL PROGRAMS</li> </ul> </li> <li>- ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CODETERMINATION</li> <li>• WORKER DEMOCRACY</li> <li>• PERSONAL DIGNITY</li> <li>• REDUCE IMPERSONAL BUREAUCRACY</li> <li>• REDUCE INEFFICIENCY &amp; WASTE</li> <li>• MERGE MILITARY WITH SOCIETY</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>GENERAL IMPACT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ADVERSARIAL NATURE OF UNIONS</li> <li>- JOB ACTIONS &amp; STRIKES</li> <li>- BUREAUCRATIC OVERHEAD</li> </ul> <p><b>POLITICAL IMPACT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- POLITICIZES MILITARY</li> <li>- ERODES CIVILIAN AUTHORITY &amp; CONTROL</li> <li>- COLLECTIVE BARGAINING</li> <li>- BUDGET PRIORITIZATION</li> <li>- LINKAGE TO PUBLIC &amp; PRIVATE UNIONS</li> <li>- LEGITIMIZES SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS</li> </ul> <p><b>MILITARY IMPACT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- REDUCTION IN READINESS</li> <li>- EROSION OF DISCIPLINE</li> <li>- DUAL CHAIN OF COMMAND</li> <li>- CHALLENGES TO LEGITIMATE AUTHORITY</li> <li>- DIVISION OF LOYALTY &amp; POLARIZATION</li> <li>- REDUCTION OF ESPRIT</li> <li>- VULNERABLE TO EXPLOITATION</li> <li>- INCREASE ADMIN &amp; TRAINING OVERHEAD</li> <li>- CHANGES IN RITUAL AND CUSTOMS</li> </ul>

Table - 1

**Unionization Con's:** Arguments against unions stress the military institution's preeminence over the individual. Institutional dominance, in the case of the military, is considered necessary to effectively provide state security against external threats. Within the military, the "rights of the individual" are secondary to the survival of the state. The case against military unions covers three categories: general, political and military (table - 1).

The issues supporting and opposing unions are difficult to validate or prioritize. Democratic nations with military unions have achieved different degrees of implementation; no military union has developed a process that meets all of the individual and collective needs stated previously. Concomitantly, military unions have not had major disruptive effects on their respective militaries or governments. It is beneficial, at this time, to examine existing military unions and the environment which allows for their existence.

### Foreign Military Unions

Military unions in Europe are widespread and highly developed. Collectively the six countries of Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands have more than sixty military associations.<sup>11</sup> The rate of organization is high, almost 100% of the officers in Scandinavia. The oldest and most established are the former associations of career officers, but

the most dynamic role in the military union movement is filled by noncommissioned officers and sergeants. The formal powers of the European unions are in some cases considerable. Swedish unions enjoy full collective bargaining, as well as, the right to strike. The Dutch and the German unions, in contrast have only limited consultation rights. Most of the European unions are affiliated with larger public employee federations.

Military unions of Europe follow two patterns. First is the development of separate unions for each class of military member and second is the distinction between professional and conscript unionism.<sup>12</sup> Different organizations exist for senior and junior officers and career NCO's. Some countries form divisions along service, religious and political affiliations. Career unions dominate in number and size over draftee groups.

European unions reflect an exclusive focus on economic and professional interests. Higher compensation is the common goal of all unions. A related issue is the regulation of work time and compensation for overtime. In some countries, unions have obtained a forty hour workweek. Additional common issues include service conditions, professional standards, occupational health and safety considerations, improved housing and better recreational and welfare services.

The Swedish military union system is the most advanced in Europe. The Swedish democratic system is the leader in protecting the individual rights of service members. Swedish military unions have the most extensive powers of European unions. Three separate



organizations represent the military and each is directly linked with one of two civilian unions. The result is that the large and powerful civilian unions bargain and negotiate directly for the military unions. Contracts are normally concluded every two years. The Swedish model, even with the right to strike, has not had a disruptive influence on civil-military relations. In fact it has become a respectable partner in the field of military personnel management.

A contrasting European model of military unionism is found in Germany. Civilian control of the military is a crucial element of the German system and the protection of the individual soldier's rights is apparent. Service members have the right to join employee associations. The German military took an interesting tact; it formed the German Servicemen's Association and became the largest military association in the world. It has not acquired significant powers and has pursued the course of a professional association. It is not tied to other civilian unions and does not generally share the viewpoints of other European military unions. It has been described as a company union with close ties to its civilian leaders. The majority of its members are career military personnel.

The Netherlands represent yet another model on the European scene. A good deal of controversy developed around the conscript union which is the largest of twelve unions in the Netherlands. Dutch military unions have little formal power; yet the draftees have forced negotiations through informal lobbying and

mobilization tactics. Initially supported by the government, it became militant in the 1970's and gained victories on issues relating to hair length, saluting and censorship of reading material. In addition, the union also gained additional pay for overtime, revised the military penal code, increased pay and benefits, and eliminated unnecessary formations and inspections. As a side note, the Dutch draftee's union is not professionally concerned with the long term success of the military as an institution.

In general, the military unions of Europe follow no specific pattern on which to base an "ideal" model. They have evolved separately within the power structures of their individual states, with the following similar characteristics. Military unions have evolved from the orderly and harmonious maturation of public sector bargaining. European military union members, despite cultural differences, seem to have goals and expectations similar to the non-union service members of the United States.

Finally, European military unions appear not to have significantly reduced the effectiveness of their respective military institutions.<sup>13</sup> This position is difficult substantiate in analytical terms; however, European nations have not expressed concern regarding the effectiveness of their militaries as a result of unionization. A dissenting view on the topic of effectiveness stresses that European militaries are considerably smaller and more restricted in their strategic and global employment than the U.S. military; therefore, the effectiveness

of unionized, European militaries has no relevance to the military of the United States.<sup>14</sup>

### Power Groups Influencing U.S. Military Unionization

In order for institutional change (unionization) to occur in the U.S. military, power group interaction would be necessary. A power group would be any group or association capable of influencing the outcome of the military union issue. Power groups can take many forms; they may be formal or informal and they can be found both inside and outside the military. Formal power groups have some form of legitimate power and formal recognition. For example, Congress and the Executive derive their power from the Constitution. Senior military leaders exercise the power associated with their assigned billets. Informal groups lack formal recognition and legitimate power; however, they possess the ability to lobby, agitate, or promote the issue of unionization. Special interest groups would be an example of an informal power units.

Power groups capable of affecting the union issue can be found inside and outside the military institution and its civilian chain of command. The President, senior DOD executives, Chairman of the JCS and the military service chiefs are part of the institution. The legislative and judicial branches of government, the AFL-CIO, AFGE, and other associations represent

various power groups outside the military.

### **Uniformed Military Leadership**

As a group, the uniformed leadership is not sympathetic to the issue of unionization. First and foremost, unionization represents "changing" the institution beyond a simple modification of behavior in response to social stimuli. Even though the members of the institution may have socially evolved or changed, the leadership of the institution is generally resistant to that socialization process<sup>15</sup> (religious and military institutions are good examples). The leadership argument against changing the institution focus on the "cost" of change, the potential for decreased responsiveness/readiness, and the politicalization of the military.

### **Executive and DOD**

The executive branch of the government is formally empowered to exercise control over the military institution through the office of the President and the Department of Defense. Previous administrations have supported the military leadership's position and opposed military unionization. Executive Orders and directives give legitimate direction to the institution regarding the union issue. In general, the administration will mirror the social and political attitudes of its "party" and constituents. The issue of subjective versus objective control is a key indicator in this process. According to Huntington, the more

conservative an administration the more likely it will pursue objective control and resist institutional change (unionism); on the other hand, the more liberal an administration the more likely it will pursue subjective control and embrace institutional change (unionism) as necessary socialization.<sup>16</sup>

### **Legislative Branch**

Congress is empowered by the Constitution to regulate and finance the military. Historically, Congress has treated the military institution as separate or unique in its existence. It has tended to isolate the military from the rest of society and create a separate system of controls and regulations: UCMJ and title 10 of the U.S. Code. In its concern for the individual service member, Congress has assumed the role of benevolent parent. It has previously guarded this responsibility with a great deal of pride and energy. In the 1970's, Congress viewed the union issue as a direct attack on its role as the military benefactor and passed legislation prohibiting military unions.

Men and women members of Congress represent a variety of viewpoints and interest groups; the issue in the 1990's is whether or not Congress will continue its past practice of benevolence towards the military institution. Recent events have indicated a move towards subjective control and a recognition of the occupational model in the military. Congress has become more responsive to special interest groups and their desire to

socialize the military and bring it more in line with society. If the military institution perceives that Congress is no longer its benefactor, the potential for friction will increase over a variety of issues. Support, within the military, for political representation will increase proportionally.

### **Judicial Branch**

The judicial system, through the courts, is empowered by the Constitution to legitimize the actions of the legislative and executive branches of government. In the past the courts have upheld the right of the military institution to exist as a separate institution and abridge some first amendment rights of its individual members. Although its power over the military is not direct, the courts are ultimately responsible for validating regulations and legislation relating to military unions.

### **Associations and Union Organizations**

Military associations and unions exist as organizations that represent a collective group of individuals. In many cases, the functions of associations and unions overlap; however, there is one significant difference between the two. The union is specifically empowered to collectively represent its members as a bargaining agent to secure benefits in excess of what the government is willing to offer.<sup>17</sup> Military associations, on the other hand, are not empowered to represent active duty members in

any official capacity with regard to pay or benefits. They serve, primarily, as support organizations.

Military associations continue to expand their influence and power base. Although prohibited from representing active duty members in any official capacity, they succinctly represent various veterans, reserves and special interest groups (spouses, dependents and others). Each group focuses on the particular interests of its members; but, every association shares two common issues: concern for the material well being of its collective membership and support for a strong national defense.

Dominate among these groups are The Reserve Officers Association (TROA), Naval Reserve Association, Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, Fleet Reserve Association, Air Force Sergeant Association, Reserve Officers' Association, and the NCO Association. These groups have strong grassroots support from their membership and are engaged in direct lobbying activities at the local, state and national levels of government. In an effort to combine forces and unify their power base twelve associations have loosely combined their efforts in the Council of Military Organizations (COMO).

Associations are opposed to to the formal recognition of military unions.<sup>18</sup> The key element to their opposition is their belief they already provide systems that address salient concerns of the military: lobby for DOD sponsored legislation, provide alternate lines of communication, communicate military needs to the public and provide (at group rates) support benefits not

available through military benefit programs. Linkage with long-term careerists and retirees is strong, while ties to the majority of the active duty servicemen and servicewomen is virtually nonexistent.

Current associations exist in relative harmony with formal power groups: Congress, the executive and the military leadership. The associations are in a good position to expand their role to all service members if the union issue is resurfaced. The creation of military unions is perceived as a threat to the associations and eventual erosion of their power base.

### **Unions**

Union efforts to organize the military ended in 1978 when legislation was passed by congress prohibiting such activities. Up to that point, unions in the public sector had grown significantly in numbers of locals and overall membership. This surge in public unionization was attributed to executive orders under the Kennedy and Johnson administrations in the 1960's.

The American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), a subset of the AFL-CIO, was the primary force behind the efforts to organize the military. In 1977, over half of its 320,000 members were civilian DOD employees. The union modified its constitution to accept military membership and polled its members regarding their position on the issue.<sup>19</sup> Ironically, 78% rejected the idea. Linkage to the military was perceived as detrimental to



the membership.

Public employee unions remain the adversarial toward the government despite significant gains in membership and influence. Public and government concerns over strikes and job actions in the public sector are the primary reason for the poor relationship.

National union leadership continues to believe that they can play a role in organizing the military. With the return of the Democratic party to the executive head of the government, there is a sense of new support for a change to the current prohibition. Unions are eager to expand their power base and influence.

### **Special Interest Groups**

These groups are often difficult to define and vary in their ability to organize and establish a power base. In most cases their power is limited to lobbying and press related efforts. Forces that stimulate socialization in the general society can also be found in the military. These groups generally have three common characteristics: (1) commonly held goals/interests that cause individuals to band together to form power blocks, (2) increased awareness of individuality and (3) a lower tolerance for frustration with regard to expectations not met.<sup>20</sup> These groups have grown in popularity and number, and many service members support their cause: examples include, ethnic minorities, women rights groups, gays and lesbians, religious fundamentalists

and environmentalists.

The ability to organize and gain political support gives these groups new and expanding power bases. Service members affiliated with specific groups have informally joined together to legitimize their cause. The military is being challenged to respond to these non-traditional influences without politicizing the institution or significantly changing its norms and values. The lack of progress in dealing with social issues may result in special interest groups demanding formal recognition.

#### U.S. Military Unionization Policy

Current policy regarding military unions is simple and straightforward; they are prohibited by law and DOD directive. The following is a summarization of title 10 of the U.S. Code, section 976 and DOD directive 1354.1.

It shall be unlawful for any person...

(1) to enroll in a military labor organization any member of the armed forces or solicit or accept dues or fees for such an organization from any member of the armed forces, or

(2) to negotiate or bargain, or attempt through any coercive act to negotiate or bargain with any civilian officer or employee or any member of the armed forces concerning the terms or conditions of service of such members;

(3) to organize ..., participate in, any strike, picketing, march, demonstration... of concerted action involving members of the armed forces that is directed against the Government of the United States.... to

(A) negotiate... terms or conditions of service of any member of the armed forces.

(B) recognize any military labor organization as a representative of individual members of the armed forces....or

(C) make any changes with respect to the terms or conditions of service in the armed forces

....  
(4) to use any military installation... for meeting, march picketing, demonstration....

It shall be unlawful for any military labor organization to represent... any member of the armed forces in connection with an grievance or complaint.

No member of the armed forces...may,

(1) negotiate or bargain on behalf of the United States concerning the terms of military service... with any person ... who represent a member of the armed forces, or

(2) permit or authorize the use of any military facility...for any meeting, march, picketing, demonstration....

Whoever violates this code in the case of an individual shall be fined not more than \$10,000 or imprisoned not more than five years, or both, in the case of an organization or association be fined not less than \$25,000 and not more than \$250,000.

Congress declared (1978): (1) The members of the armed forces must be prepared to fight to protect welfare security and liberty of the United States. (2) Discipline and prompt obedience to lawful orders are essential. (3) Conventional collective bargaining cannot be applied between members of the armed forces. (4) Strikes and other job action have no place in the armed forces. (5) Unionization would be incompatible with the chain of command and would undermine the role and authority of the commander and would impair morale and readiness. (6) The purpose of this act is to promote the readiness of the armed forces.

## **Factors and Forecast for the U.S Military**

### **Factors in the U.S. Influencing a Trend Toward Unionization:**

1. The transition from objective to subjective control of the military will politicize the institution.
2. The broad transitioning of the service member from the professional to the occupational model will elevate the needs of the individual above that of the institution.
3. The influence of special interest groups to change the professional values and norms of the military will change the institution.

### **Factors in the U.S. Influencing a Trend Away From Unionization:**

1. The strong legislation prohibiting military unions will continue to be the cornerstone of resistance to unionization.
2. The adversarial nature of the union movement in the U.S. will thwart efforts to change the current system.

### **Forecast for the U.S. Military**

Forecasting military unionization is not a black or white proposition; however, it is predictable in various shades of gray. First, military unionization is linked to the

politicalization of the military. This issue is tied directly to the form of civilian military control pursued by a democratic government: subjective versus objective control. Second, the unionization issue must consider where the service member fits on the occupational versus professional continuum. Third, various formal and informal power groups are capable of influencing the unionization issue. Figure 1 illustrates their combined effect on the military institution when the threat to vital interests is very high (war). During periods of conflict, or sustained threat, unionization of the military, in a democratic society, is unlikely due to the movement of the institution toward the professional/objective control quadrant.

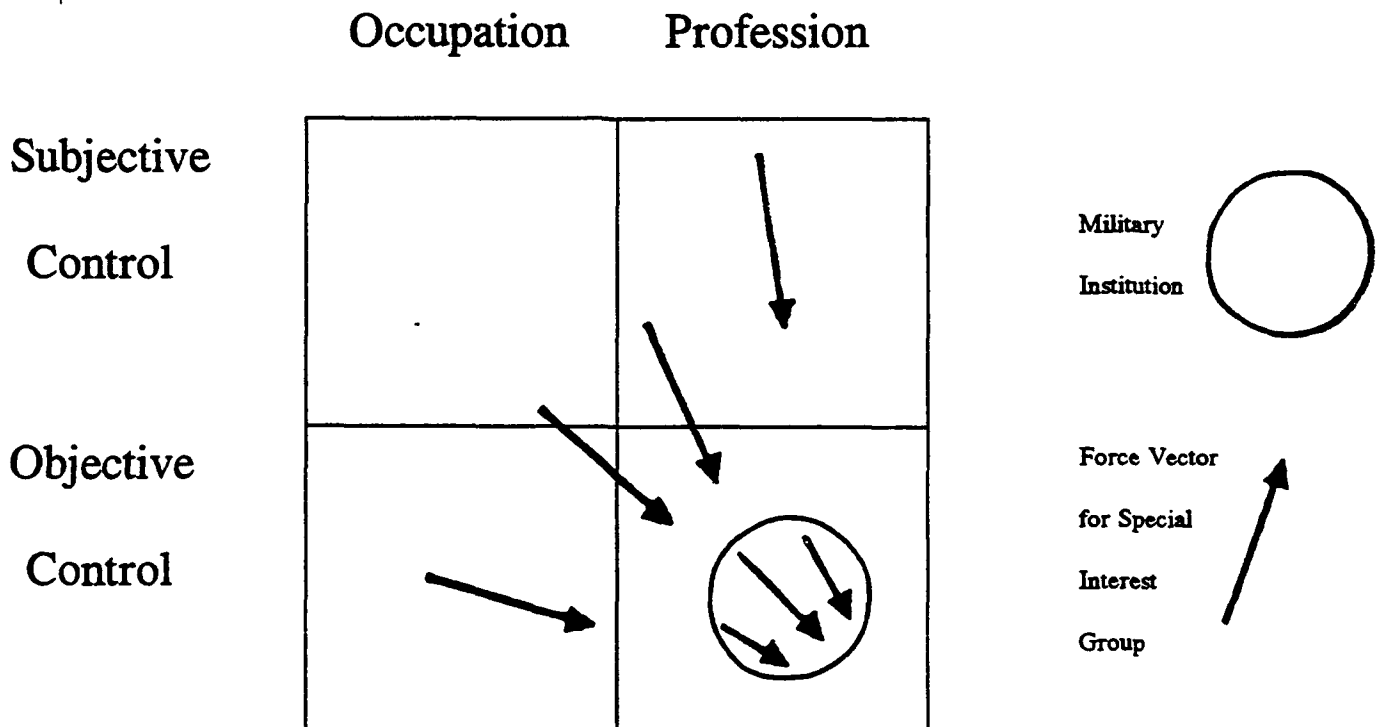


Figure - 1

Figure 2 illustrates the military institution in a democratic society that has no threat to its vital interests. The founding fathers viewed the military institution's eventual integration back into its parent society.

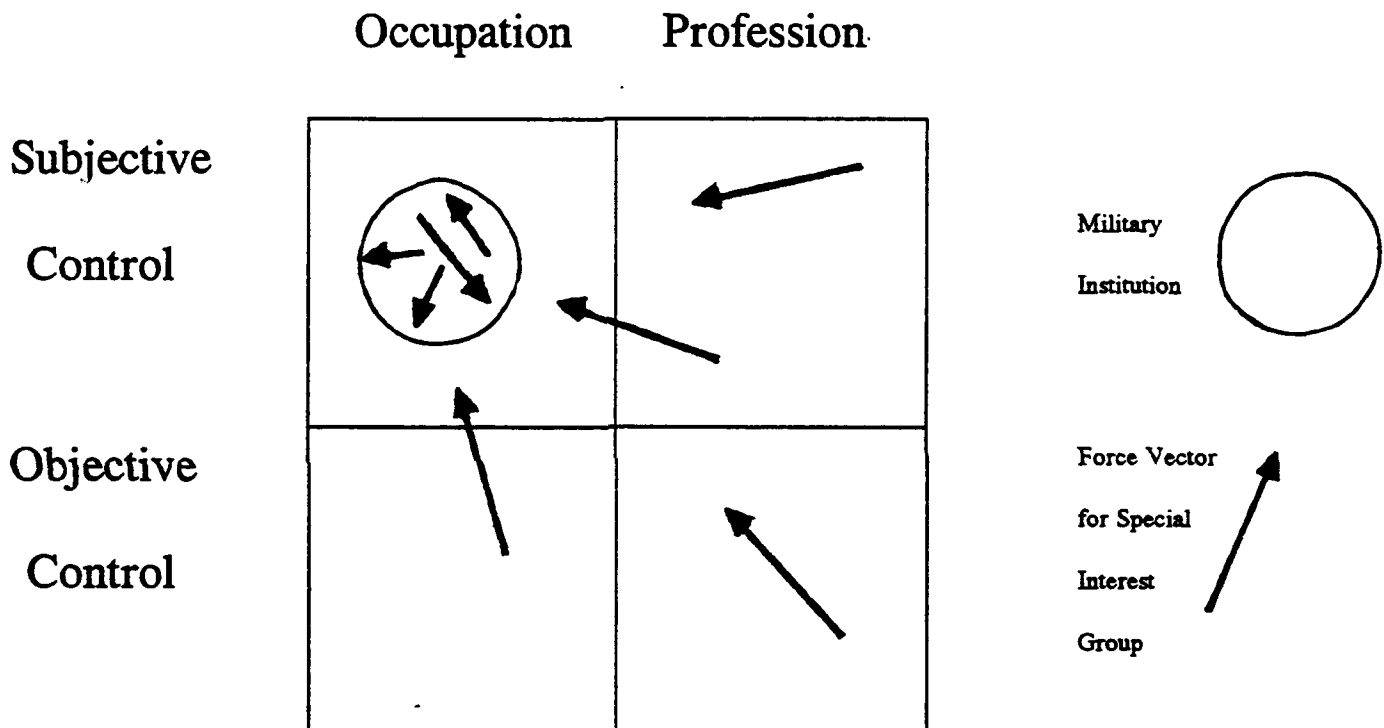


Figure - 2

Military unionization, in this case, is high due to the liberal nature of democratic societies. The military institution is likely to assume the qualities of the parent society.

Figure 3 represents the current U.S. military institution. The cold war has ended. As a result, the threat to U.S. vital

interests has diminished and become poorly defined. Various formal and informal special interest groups are pursuing their divergent agenda and directing the military away from the the professional/objective quadrant toward the occupational/subjective area.

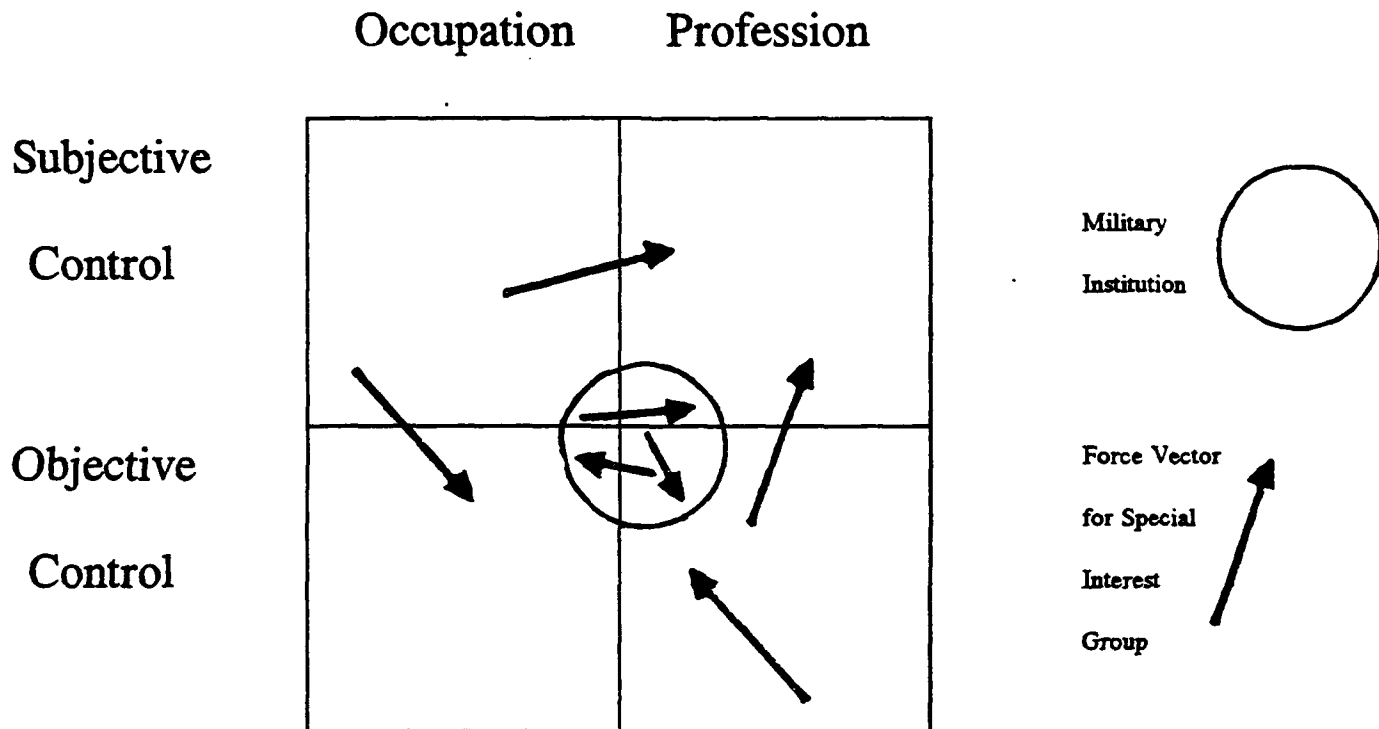


Figure - 3

Unionization of the military is a natural conclusion if the institution is guided into the occupational/subjective quadrant.

### Conclusion

A reduced threat to U.S. vital interests has opened the

floodgate for down-sizing and structurally changing the military institution. This down-sizing will be driven by special interest groups concerned with a variety of economic, political and social factors. With regard to military unionization, two issues are relevant. First, what form of control (subject vs. objective) will evolve during the down-sizing? And second, will the service member's role transition from a profession to an occupation? It is my contention that military unionization, in democratic societies, is a natural outcome of subjective control and occupationalization of the military.

The unionization of European militaries supports this conclusion. In addition, the relative strength and effectiveness of a specific European military union is directly proportional to the degree of subjective control and occupationalization of the armed forces. This accounts for the differences in the various European models.

Special interest groups, inside and outside the institution, control the future of the U.S. military during this period of mandated change. Each group, in pursuit of its own agenda, will influence the magnitude and direction of change on the military institution. Although unionization of the armed forces is currently prohibited, it is certain that the issue will resurface if the institution moves toward an occupation oriented service and becomes controlled by a subjective minded civilian leadership.



# ENDNOTES

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4. Huntington, p 83.
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6. Moskos, Charles, "The All Volunteer Military: Profession or Occupation," Parameters 3, 1 (1977), p 2.
7. Moskos, p 2-3.
8. Taylor, p 70.
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10. Taylor, p 9.
11. Cortright, David "Report to the AFGE: Military Unions of Europe," American Federation of Government Employees, Washington, D.C., August 1979, p 11.
12. Taylor, A succinct summary of foreign military unions is used to develop this particular section. p 222-227.
13. Taylor, p 227.
14. Sime, Jr., Colben K, "The Issue of Military Unionism: Genesis, Current Status, and Resolution," A National Security Affairs Monograph, 77-5, National Defense University Press, Washington, 1977. p. 57.
15. Sime, p 29.
16. Huntington, (conservative military relations), pages 94, 464. (liberal military relations), pages 94, 155.
17. Taylor, p 13.
18. Sime, p 36.

19. Sabrosky, Alan Ned, Blue-Collar Soldiers? Unionization and the U.S. Military, Philadelphia: Foreign Policy Research Institute Press, p 134.

20. Taylor, p 112.

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